

Development of a K – 3 Sexuality Education Curriculum

A Senior Honors Thesis

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## **Introduction**

Sexuality education has always been a source of much turmoil and debate within school systems as well as at the community, state, and national level. Initially many believed that sexuality education in schools was unnecessary. They argued that parents should teach their children about sexuality and that schools should not be involved. Now most people are in favor of sexuality education in schools, but a debate has cropped up about what should be taught and at what grade level. This debate has meant that there has not been a great deal of sexuality education at the elementary level. Most of the sexuality education students receive today is at the high school level, with some at the middle school level.

There are many who argue that teaching sexuality to students at the elementary level is unnecessary. Early childhood is not the time to teach about sexuality. Students should not be thinking about sex. Because they are not thinking about or having sex, they do not need to know anything about it. The only problem is that children are growing up a lot faster now and learning more about sexuality from their older siblings, peers, and even the media. There are many influences on a child's learning. It would be better to teach them the correct information early on in their education so they are prepared for the future.

Our society tells us that sex and sexuality are taboo topics. They are not to be talked about, especially outside of the home. This attitude only hurts children and how they feel about themselves and sexuality. When sexuality is approached in an honest and open way students will become more comfortable with the topic and with talking about it. Comfort with a topic and not being afraid to talk about it can help children when they run

into problems or if they have questions. They would know who they could talk to and trust to give them the answers they need. This is a good thing because it means students are finding out the right answers and are not afraid to discuss what can sometimes be uncomfortable or difficult concepts or ideas. Education in general uses the idea of creating a safe environment for children to learn in. Learning about sexuality should be no different from any other topic.

Beginning sexuality education in early childhood is one of the best ways to help children feel comfortable with the topic and keep them from making decisions based on false information in the future. People may argue that children do not need to learn about sexuality at an early age because they will not have to think about it for years. However, what happens if a student becomes sexually active before they have had a class or at least a few lessons on sexuality? What happens to children who are sexually abused by adults and do not know it is wrong or understand what is happening to them? These are two very good reasons sexuality should be taught at an early age. This is not to say they would be given all the information they would ever need in kindergarten. Lessons need to be developmentally appropriate, but you cannot approach serious and important lessons later on without first building a firm foundation. Sexuality education in early childhood can help build the foundation for future learning and experiences.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this project was to explore the curriculum and concepts being taught in sexuality education at the elementary school level. Once this research was completed and little evidence was found of sexuality education at the early elementary

level, the next step was to develop a curriculum that could be used for teaching early elementary students about sexuality. The topics covered within this curriculum are anatomy, growth and development, reproduction, body image, and sexual orientation.

### **Review of Literature**

To figure out where sexuality education is going, it is important to first know where it has been. John A. Clark (2001) looked at the history of sexuality education in New Zealand elementary schools. He found that over the years questions have been raised about whether sexuality education was the parents' responsibility, how much schools and parents should collaborate, and how much children should learn about the various topics within human sexuality. The main struggle in this debate was between the liberals and the conservatives. The liberals generally wanted more freedom in what was taught, while conservatives had definite ideas about what some inappropriate topics were. The debate began in 1945 when the Primary School Syllabus under Health Education said that sexuality education had no place in the school. Children were allowed to ask questions and be answered in a forthright manner, but it was not to be part of the curriculum.

Slowly liberals gained some ground, getting some sexuality education into the classroom, but the Police Offences Amendment Act of 1954 did not allow teachers to discuss condom use with students under the age of 16. This act was highly debated and often revisited, but continued to remain unchanged until around 1977. This revision of the act stated that contraception could be taught in the classroom, but only when the school and school committee had approved it. When a new, more liberal Minister of

Education was elected in 1985 a few things changed. Human sexuality could be taught, but the principal of the school had to provide a report to the school committee recommending it, the committee had to approve it, and parents had to give their permission for their child to be in the class. Parents had to be permitted to withdraw their child from the class. These rules are still in place today. The continued struggle to implement some type of compulsory sexuality education continues at all grade levels, but especially at the elementary school level.

Looking closer to home, a researcher would find a similar situation here in the United States. William A. Firestone (1994) studied the path sexuality education has taken in New Jersey schools. The discussion began in 1979, when a state regulation required the implementation of a family life education curriculum be taught at every grade level. The topics included in the curriculum were plant and animal growth and reproduction, human reproduction, dating, sexually transmitted diseases, and child abuse and assault. Parents were permitted to withdraw their child from these classes. The opponents to this regulation forced the state senate to review it. The board that had developed the regulation was asked to revise it. In 1980 a broad version of the state regulation was adopted. Conservatives still opposed the regulation. They wanted to stress abstinence more than any other methods of lowering risk of sexually transmitted diseases and pregnancy. The “stress abstinence” bill passed in both houses of the New Jersey legislature, but was stopped by a gubernatorial veto.

Firestone then went on to study the current trends in sexuality education and public opinion. Sexuality education teachers were interviewed and two public opinion polls were used for the study. Twelve hundred teachers were randomly selected from the

2244 instructor names given by 245 superintendents. Five hundred six teachers responded to the surveys. The teacher survey was developed from previous studies and qualitative interviews. These surveys were sent out in the spring of 1992. The public opinion survey was an Eagleton Poll of a random sample of 800 New Jersey residents. These residents were 18 years of age and older. This poll was conducted by phone February 20 – 26, 1992.

It was found that most teachers talked about the easy topics that are not uncomfortable and will not bring conflict with parents. Teachers also discussed general issues, such as self esteem, and skills like decision making with their students. All 11 districts stressed abstinence. Many teachers discussed other options beyond abstinence, but stressed abstinence more than the others. There were some districts that prohibited talking about any method other than abstinence in the classroom. A lot of attention was given to HIV and AIDS in the programs. The author stated that prevention oriented topics need to be started early in a student's education. It is too late to teach about prevention if a student is already sexually active. There are many topics not covered in elementary school. Some of these topics include STDs, contraception and condom use, sexual orientation, masturbation, sexual pleasure, sexual expression without risk, and abortion. These are generally the topics that are either uncomfortable to teach or that parents do not approve of, yet are key topics if students are to be educated about risks and prevention. Parental pressure was often a contributing factor to what a teacher felt comfortable teaching in the classroom.

Opposition from parents is often a key factor in sexuality education. Parents either pull their child out of the classroom or make a teacher feel they should not discuss

certain topics with students. Teachers and school systems do not want parents to oppose what their children are being taught in school. Patricia Donovan (1998) looked at issues and challenges in sexuality education. She reported that abstinence education was the most common form of sexuality education. When AIDS became a major issue in the 1980s, it became difficult to deny the need for some sort of sexuality education in the schools. The Surgeon General at the time, C. Everett Koop, said sexuality education should be started as early as third grade. Despite this opinion, there were, and still are, many topics that are not discussed in the curriculum. Some of these topics include abortion, masturbation, and homosexuality.

On top of arguments about what should be taught, there were some who felt educating students of different sexes in the same classroom was inappropriate. Opponents felt that girls should be educated in one room while boys went to another. Arguments have been made that teaching different sexes in the same classroom can open channels of communication between the two. There are times, however, such as when elementary students are taught about puberty that it might be more appropriate for students to be separated by sex.

Donovan then goes on to discuss obstacles in sexuality education. One of these obstacles is that sexuality education is a small part of the curriculum. Not a lot of time is spent talking about sexuality. Another obstacle is the fact that teachers are often not at ease with the topic. This makes teaching it more difficult. The author suggests that professional training should be improved, the establishment of a local advisory committee would help smooth the way, and encouragement of parental participation



would help. The author suggests that comprehensive sexuality education should be promoted, even in the face of opposition.

Jan Milton (2003) took part in a study to determine what was being taught in elementary schools in Sydney, Australia. Four New South Wales elementary schools were asked to participate in the study. The participating teachers either currently taught or at one point taught sexuality education in grades five or six. These teachers participated in focus groups which were run by an experienced mediator. The discussions were generally about 90 minutes long and were tape recorded for later analysis. Puberty, menstruation, reproduction, sexual identity, and STIs were all listed in the primary school personal development, health and physical education curriculum. All schools looked at the changes at puberty, the reproductive system, and relationships and responsibilities. Students were permitted to ask questions about topics not covered in class.

There were still topics not covered in the class, such as contraceptives. Students being permitted to ask questions could help alleviate some oversight in the teacher's lessons, but do not help if a student does not know what to ask. The teachers talked about how their comfort level and concerns about how parental approval shaped their ability to teach sexuality education. Parental support was a major contributor to the implementation and comprehensive look at sexuality education.

Kann, Brener, and Allensworth (2001) reviewed a great deal of research that looked at percentages of states, districts, and schools that required health topics to be taught at each school level and provided funding for staff development. They also looked at the median number of hours spent on a topic within elementary, middle, and high

school as well as the percentage of schools teaching that topic. This data was collected by the Kaiser Family Foundation in the first School Health Policies and Programs Study in 1994. Questionnaires were used to collect this data. All of the state education agencies contacted responded, while 67% of districts, 70% of schools, and 90% of classroom teachers selected completed the questionnaire. The most common respondents were health education, physical education, and regular classroom teachers along with principals.

It was found that the percentage of health education topics required to be taught at each level of elementary school decreased from the state level to the district level to the school level. The exception to this trend was human sexuality. It increased at each progressive level. Results showed that the percentage of states providing funding and staff development was higher than at the district level for all of the topics previously listed. The median hours spent teaching broad topics in HIV prevention, pregnancy prevention, and STD prevention were one hour each at the elementary school level. The median number of hours increased by one at the middle school level and by one more at the high school level. The percentage of elementary schools teaching certain topics was very indicative of what was deemed appropriate for that age group. Elementary schools were not even asked if they talked about condom efficacy, correct usage of condoms, the risks of having multiple partners, or sexual identity and orientation. The percentages of elementary schools that taught any topic about sexuality were always less than both the middle and high school percentages. Not as much needs to be taught at the elementary school level as in middle or high school, but there are some topics that have not been covered in the past that are important for all ages to know.

A different component of sexuality education was studied by Susan K. Tellijohann and Sherry A. Everett (1997). Everett looked at a sexual abuse curriculum at the third grade level. The study was conducted to help determine if education about sexual abuse would help children avoid it, or at the very least help them know what it was and what they could do if it happened to them. This curriculum was taught in two one-hour sessions over two weeks. It was run by volunteers who had attended a 30-hour training session as well as staff members from a social service agency. Videos, demonstrations, discussions, and role-plays were all used to educate the children. Third grade students were taken from a random sample of nine northwest Ohio's urban, suburban, and rural schools.

A 24-item instrument was used to evaluate the results of the sexual abuse prevention curriculum. The survey included 18 knowledge items, two behavioral intention items, and one item asking if the child knew an adult outside the family they could go to if they were sexually abused. Correct or most desirable responses were given more points than incorrect or least desirable answers, which received zero points. A pretest was given one week before the curriculum was taught and a posttest was given one week afterward. Two hundred thirty six children were in the experimental group while 195 were in the control group. It was found that there was only a slight gain in knowledge between the pretest and posttest. Comparisons between the experimental children's pretest and posttest showed statistically significant progress for behavioral intentions. It is difficult to determine whether or not the curriculum would help a child in a sexually abusive situation. There is no ethical way to put a child in that situation to see if they use what they were taught. This research is very different from the research

discussed previously, but is still a component of sexuality education. Educating children about sexuality is key to helping them understand when something is okay and when it is not. It can also teach them about what they can do to protect themselves against other people, STDs, pregnancy, and other risky sexual behaviors.

Milton (2000) discussed the future of sexuality education. Parents are the first teachers of sexuality. They help children develop their ideas about sexuality and whether they are ashamed of it. Parents also model gender roles and relationships with others. A partnership between parents, teachers, and schools is important to help children learn to process the information about sexuality they see every day. This information comes from their peers, the adults around them, and the media. Children need help sorting through all of the information and parents and teachers should be able to work together to do so. If parents frequently discuss sexuality with their children from an early age and the school curriculum compliments the discussion as the child gets older, then they will become well balanced in sexuality as high school students. A partnership between parents, teachers, and schools is very important in creating an environment that shares the same information and ideas. It must form a safe community for children to learn about sexuality.

Human sexuality is not a topic that is covered in a forthright manner in Ohio's elementary schools. Looking at the life science academic standards some parts of sexuality can be found (Ohio Academic Content Standards, 2005). It is not until third grade there is an obvious look at sexuality. One of the standards talks about different animals' life cycles, including reproduction. In the fourth grade students are to compare the life cycles of different plants. There is nothing about human life cycles in particular,

though they could be considered an animal. Before the third grade children are to figure out that there are differences between animals and plants. This includes differences between plants and animals of the same species. This may be a glimpse of physical differences in males and females. Overall, not a whole lot is directly taught about sexuality to younger elementary school children.

As you can see sexuality education has been a very controversial topic at all age levels, but especially at the elementary school level. Many people believe that since children that young are not sexually active they do not need to know about it. Children should learn about sexuality when they are older and more likely to be thinking about becoming sexually active. The only problem is that children are often sexually active before they receive the information they need to protect themselves. Educating children early helps ensure that they have the information they need before they ever need to make a decision about becoming sexually active. This knowledge also helps them communicate with others better if they have experienced sexual abuse of some kind. Milton (2000) made a very good point in saying: “Our education about sexuality is lifelong and many people assist us in the process.” This is very true and should be applied to sexuality education. It is a lifelong process, so it should be taught throughout the lifespan, not just as children approach puberty.

### **Procedure**

Research was collected from scholarly journals to give an initial idea of the general sexuality topics taught in early childhood. Next guidelines developed by the Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS) (2004) were

reviewed and used to develop objectives within each section of the early elementary sexuality education curriculum developed in this study.

The sections within the curriculum are anatomy, growth and development, reproduction, body image, and sexual orientation. The objectives within each section are presented below:

### Anatomy

Students will:

1. Correctly name common body parts and function
2. Recognize there are differences between the anatomy of boys and girls, both internal and external
3. Name reproductive and sexual organs of the male and female using the correct names

### Growth and Development

Students will:

1. Understand that each person's body changes as they get older
2. Learn that puberty is a time of physical and emotional change
3. Know that every person's body changes at a different rate
4. Know that people can have babies only after they have reached puberty

### Reproduction

Students will:

1. Understand that a male and female are required to create a baby
2. Know that all animals reproduce
3. Understand that men and women have reproductive organs and cells specifically for reproduction (sperm and egg cells)
4. Know that for reproduction to take place a sperm cell and an egg cell must come together
5. Comprehend that the baby grows inside the woman's uterus
6. A baby comes out of the woman's body through the vagina or through an operation called a Caesarian Section

### Body Image

Students will:

1. Be aware that bodies come in different shapes, sizes, and colors
2. Know that everyone's body is special. This is also true of people who are disabled

3. Understand that differences in bodies make everyone unique and special
4. Realize that every person can be proud of their body
5. Appreciate the differences between all people

## Sexual Orientation

### Students will:

1. Be made aware that there are different types of love
2. Know that people can love people of the same or opposite sex.
3. Understand that people who love people of the opposite sex are heterosexual.
4. Know that people who love people of the same sex are homosexual.
5. Recognize that homosexual men may be called gay men and homosexual women are sometimes called lesbians.
6. Understand that all people deserve to be respected no matter who they love.
7. Know that nobody deserves to be called names or made fun of.
8. Recognize that there are many different types of families

The format and organization of the curriculum was based on a sexuality curriculum developed for middle school students, *Project Taking Charge* (1995). The main sections in each topic area were: objectives, materials needed for the activities, basic concepts, introduction, class activities, review, and teacher resources. The main concepts section summarized what the students should get out of each section. The introduction is what the teacher could say to introduce the topic being taught. The review was meant to summarize the topics covered in each section and ensure that students learned what they were supposed to. The teacher resources section has suggestions for resources a teacher might find helpful in preparing to teach each topic or books that could be used along with each lesson. A copy of the curriculum can be found in Appendix A.

Four early elementary school teachers agreed to review the curriculum. They were asked to evaluate the content, activities, and the organization of the curriculum. (See Appendix B for a copy of the teacher assessment instrument.) Their responses were used to reflect on the curriculum developed in this study. The responses also were

compared to what the research on sexuality education at the early elementary school level had to say.

### **Findings**

Four early elementary school teachers ranging from kindergarten through third grade from a suburban school in Akron, Ohio reviewed the curriculum developed in this study. Each answered questions about the content, activities, and organization of the curriculum.

#### **Content**

The teachers mostly agreed that the overall content was acceptable. Most already teach about anatomy, focusing on the major organs and systems. One teacher teaches life cycles by studying frogs. Another teacher uses baby pictures when teaching about timelines. This same teacher also teaches about how bodies change and grow although not through puberty. In addition, she takes it upon herself to teach about body image, uniqueness, and respect even though it is not part of any curriculum the school is using.

There were sections of the content that the teachers did not think they would feel comfortable teaching or that the school system and parents would not allow to be taught. All of the teachers felt that the section on sexual orientation would not be an appropriate subject in the classroom. It would be too much of a “touchy” topic. One teacher said she thought it would be more appropriate at the middle school level. Another teacher cautioned that if this topic was discussed the teacher should be ready for any comments students might make during discussions. Children repeat what they hear at home and the



teacher must be able to validate the student's beliefs and find a way to tie it back into acceptance and diversity.

None of the teachers were comfortable with the explicitness of the anatomy section. They did not feel comfortable talking with their students about reproductive organs and systems at the early elementary level, especially not in kindergarten and first grade. One teacher also thought that students did not need to learn about puberty during the first couple years of elementary school. She also felt that discussing methods of child birth was not appropriate. There was one teacher who said she would not currently teach any of the topics in her classroom, especially not the sex organs in the anatomy section. Each teacher said she found most of the content to be things students do need to learn, but the school system would probably not allow it to be taught in its entirety.

### Activities

Generally the teachers said they liked the activities, but would not use all of them. All of them liked the activities in the anatomy section, especially having the children outline their body then draw in the organs. One teacher said that for the topics she would be comfortable teaching she liked the activities. One teacher picked out certain parts of activities that she would not use, but said she would use the rest. She put restrictions on teaching of the sex organs until the later elementary years. She would also not teach students about puberty. She said she would not feel comfortable showing the transparency included in the reproduction section.

All the teachers liked the use of books to help teach concepts to students. One said she thought *Glad to be Me* was a great choice for teaching about body image. A few new resources were shared to help with activities for the students. The website

<http://www.sciencenetlinks.com/interactives/systems.html> was suggested for helping students learn the major body systems. On this website the parts of each system can be dropped into “Mr. Body” one system at a time. Another teacher suggested activities from the Montessori curriculum. She said there are some great diagrams and activities for labeling body parts and organs.

### Organization

All four of the teachers agreed that the format and organization of the curriculum were easy to follow and understand. They found the concepts being taught easy to find and easy to teach. Every step was clear and sequential making the curriculum easy to use. One teacher commented that she really liked having the materials needed listed as well as resources that could be useful.

### **Discussion and Conclusions**

All of the teachers commented on the fact that they would not teach these two topics, sex organs in the anatomy section and sexual orientation, because they did not think the parents would be supportive of it. The school system’s view of those topics would also be a concern. This was given by teachers as a reason many teachers do not teach certain sexuality topics. The biggest deterrent from teaching sexuality in the classroom appears to be teachers’ perceptions of how parents would react. They believe that parents feel that children should learn about human sexuality at home and not in the classroom. Their perceptions may not be accurate, but in the 1999 Hickman-Brown Public Opinion Research Survey it was found that only 17% of respondents supported sexuality education classes for early elementary students (age 6 through 8), while 78% opposed it (SIECUS). One teacher did comment that her own children have been taught

from an early age about sexual orientation, but she would not attempt to teach it in her classroom.

Another factor that influenced whether the teachers would use the curriculum developed in this study or not was their comfort level with the topics. A couple of the teachers said that they would not feel comfortable teaching early elementary students about sex organs in an anatomy lesson or talking about sexual orientation. Since they are uncomfortable with the topics they would rather not teach them. This was also a factor found in some of the research articles (Donovan, 1998; Firestone, 1994; Milton, 2003). The teachers participating in the study also said that they would not teach a few topics in a sexuality curriculum because they did not feel at ease with it. It does make sense that when a person is not comfortable with a topic they do not want to talk about it, let alone teach it to their students.

It is important to remember that parents are the first teachers of human sexuality. They help their children form their first impressions about what is okay to talk about and what is not. Parents' opinions and comfort levels usually filter to their children. Parents do not always have the knowledge to teach their children certain topics. This is when schools and teachers come into play. Teachers can help parents bridge the gap between what they know and how to best teach their children. Parents and teachers working together will benefit students the most. Together they can form a safe community where children can learn and ask questions about sexuality.

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Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (2004). *Guidelines for comprehensive sexuality education: Kindergarten – 12<sup>th</sup> grade, third edition*. Fulton Press.

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Ohio Academic Content Standards

[http://www.ode.state.oh.us/academic\\_content\\_standards/ScienceContentStd/PDF/SCIEN CE.pdf](http://www.ode.state.oh.us/academic_content_standards/ScienceContentStd/PDF/SCIEN CE.pdf) accessed October 31, 2005

Hickman-Brown Public Opinion Research Study

<http://www.siecus.org/parent/pare0003.html> accessed May 18, 2006

## Appendix A

### Anatomy

#### Objectives:

Students will:

1. Correctly name common body parts and function
2. Recognize there are differences between the anatomy of boys and girls, both internal and external
3. Name reproductive and sexual organs of the male and female using the correct names

#### Materials Needed:

Teacher Resources

Large pieces of paper

Markers

Crayons

Worksheets: Label the Body diagrams

Transparencies: Label the Body diagrams

Markers to use on transparencies

Overhead projector

#### Basic Concepts:

Every person's body is made up of many parts that work together. These parts are on the inside of the body as well as the outside.

Boys and girls have some body parts that are different like the penis and vagina.

#### Introduction (2 minutes):

"We all know that our bodies are made up of different parts. These parts work together to help us move, eat and digest food, and do many other things. Today we are going to learn about some of these body parts, where they are, and what they do."

#### Class Activities:

"Kid to Kid" (5 minutes)

"Label the Body" (30 minutes)

"Outlines" (30 minutes)

#### Activity 1:

"Kid to Kid" (5 minutes)

1. Ask the students to break into pairs and stand together. Make sure each pair has enough space to move around a bit.
2. Explain that for this activity you will be giving them instructions they need to follow, so they must listen carefully. You will call out a body part to a body part. Ex. Hand to hand. Students must touch their hand to their partner's hand. You

- can also say head to shoulder so the students would put their head on their partner's shoulder.
3. Use many different variations of combinations to help introduce basic anatomy of the body.

#### Activity 2:

##### "Label the Body" (30 minutes)

1. Distribute the Label the Body worksheets to the students. Start with the worksheet that labels the outside of the body first.
2. Have the students help you fill in the blanks on the worksheet. For younger students you may want to give them an already labeled worksheet and have them follow directions to color certain areas a specific color. While you are filling in the blanks discuss what the function of each part is.
3. When the worksheet showing the exterior of the human body is completed move on to the worksheet that illustrates the internal organs. Fill in the blanks and/or color the organs while discussing what the purposes of the organs are.
4. Finally move on to the worksheet the shows the reproductive system. Explain to students that boys and girls have different organs. Label the basic reproductive organs (penis, testicles, vagina, and uterus).

#### Activity 3:

##### "Outlines" (30 minutes)

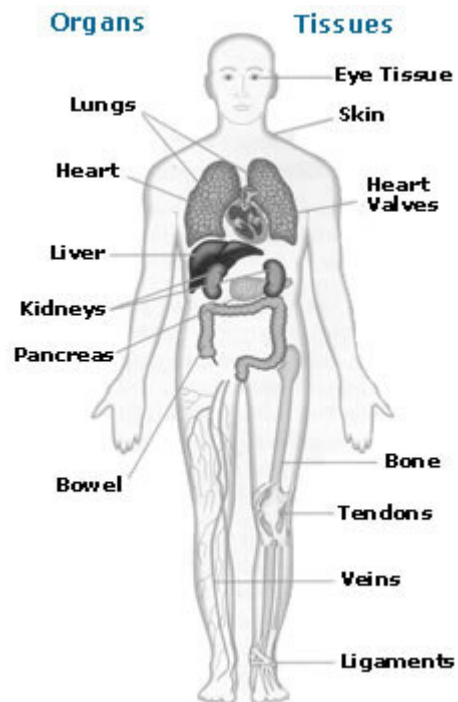
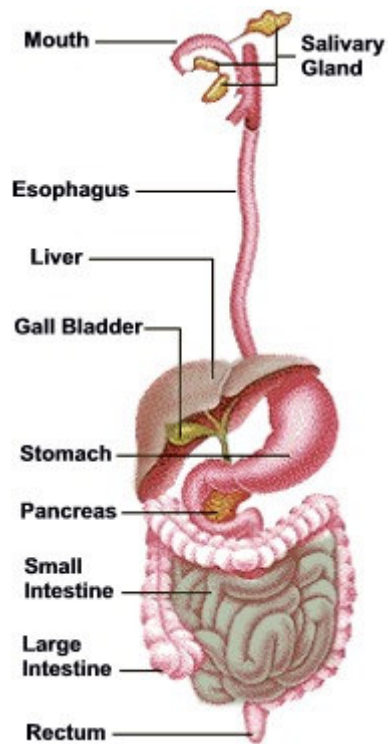
1. Have the students break into pairs. Distribute to each pair a large piece of paper and markers. The students should also use their Label the Body worksheets.
2. Have one student lay on the paper while the other student outlines the shape of the body with a marker. Once this is completed the students should work together to draw the major internal organs and label internal and external body parts.

#### Review:

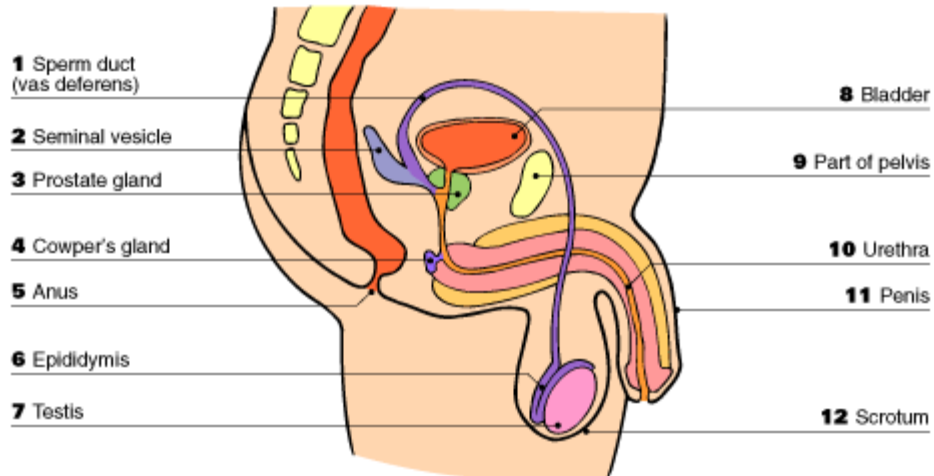
1. Reiterate that the body is made up of many parts that work together. Ask the students to name some of them and their functions.
2. Ask students how boys and girls are different on the outside (penis/vagina) and on the inside (uterus/testicles).

## Teacher Resources

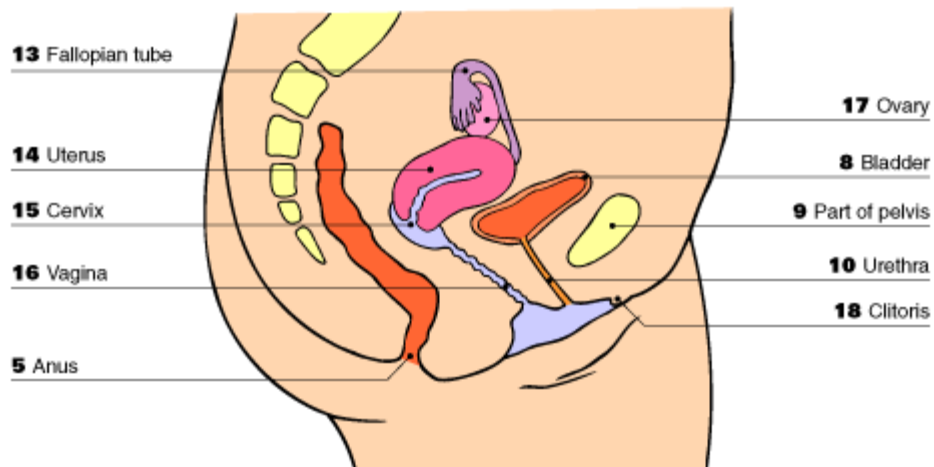
<http://www.innerbody.com/htm/body.html>



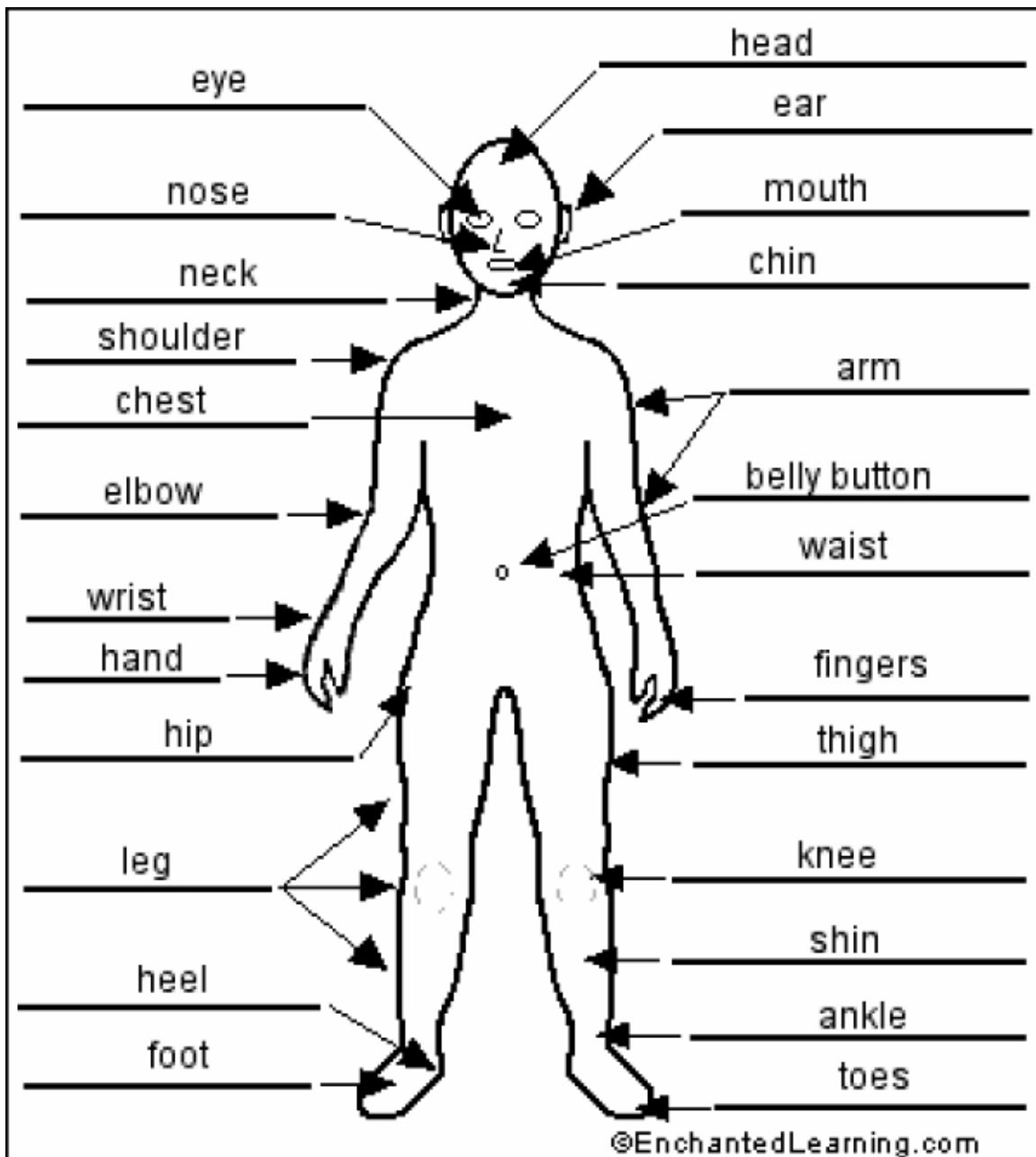
### Section through male pelvis



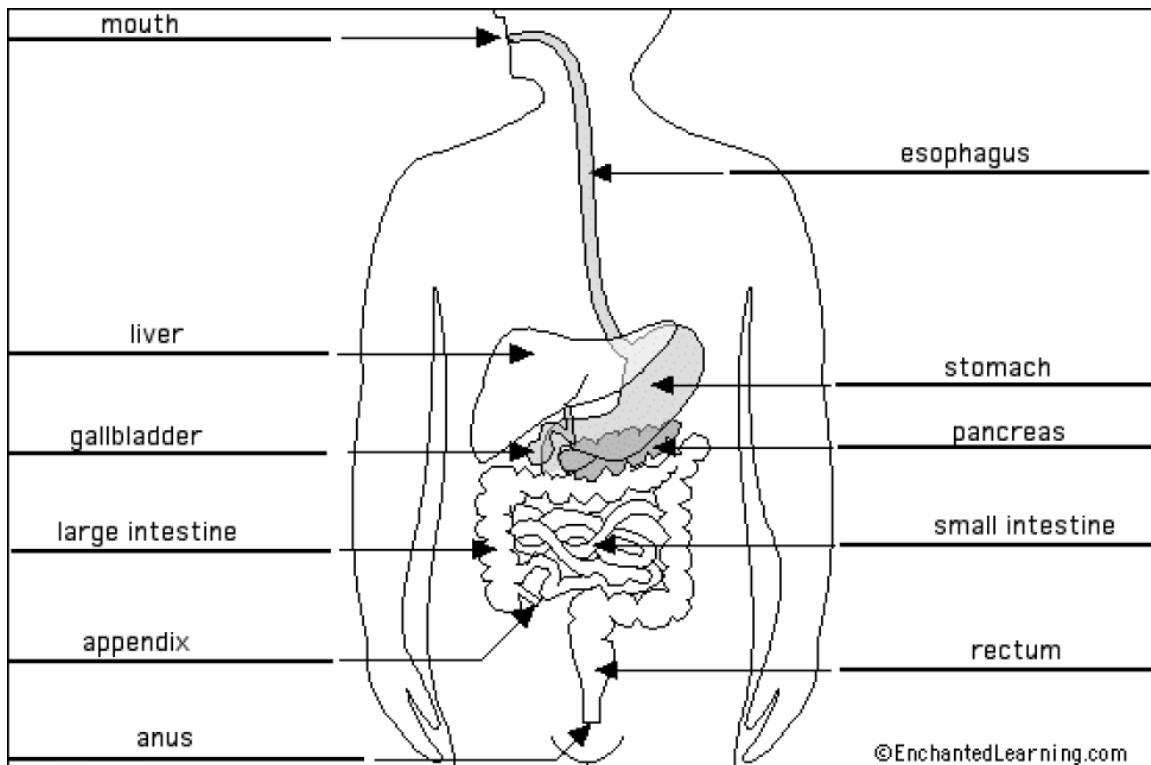
### Section through female pelvis







ankle	ear	hand	leg	shoulder
arm	elbow	head	mouth	thigh
belly button	eye	heel	nose	toes
chest	fingers	hip	neck	waist
chin	foot	knee	shin	wrist



**anus** - the opening at the end of the digestive system from which feces exit the body.

**appendix** - a small sac located near the start of the large intestine.

**esophagus** - the long tube between the mouth and the stomach. It uses rhythmic muscle movements (called peristalsis) to force food from the throat into the stomach.

**gall bladder** - a small, sac-like organ located by the duodenum. It stores and releases bile (a digestive chemical which is produced in the liver) into the small intestine.

**large intestine** - the long, wide tube that food goes through after it goes through the small intestine.

**liver** - a large organ located above and in front of the stomach. It filters toxins from the blood, and makes bile (which breaks down fats) and some blood proteins.

**mouth** - the first part of the digestive system, where food enters the body. Chewing and salivary enzymes in the mouth are the beginning of the digestive process (breaking down the food).

**pancreas** - an enzyme-producing gland located below the stomach and above the intestines. Enzymes from the pancreas help in the digestion of carbohydrates, fats and proteins in the small intestine.

**rectum** - the lower part of the large intestine, where feces are stored before they are excreted from the body.

**small intestine** - the long, thin winding tube that food goes through after it leaves the stomach.

**stomach** - a sack-like, muscular organ that is attached to the esophagus. When food enters the stomach, it is churned in an acid bath.

## **Growth and Development**

### **Objectives:**

Students will:

1. Understand that each person's body changes as they get older.
2. Learn that puberty is a time of physical and emotional change
3. Know that every person's body changes at a different rate.
4. Know that people can have babies only after they have reached puberty.

### **Materials Needed:**

Teacher Resources

*When I was little: A four year old's memoir of her youth* by Jamie Lee Curtis

Pictures of students growing up

Butcher Paper for each student

Glue or tape

Markers

### **Basic Concepts:**

Everybody's body changes as they get older. This change is especially noticeable when children reach puberty. The body is starting to make the change from childhood to adulthood.

### **Introduction (1 minute):**

"Our bodies change as we get older. Our bodies change on the inside and the outside. We all change in similar ways but the time may be different."

### **Class Activities:**

"When I was little" (20 minutes)

"My Timeline" (30 minutes)

"Discussion" (20 minutes)

### **Activity 1:**

"When I was little" (20 minutes)

1. Begin a discussion with the students about how their bodies have changed as they have gotten older. Ask them how they think they have grown and changed. Point out that they have gotten taller, their feet have gotten bigger, etc. Then discuss how their growth has enabled them to do more things.
2. When the children finish expressing their ideas read *When I was little: A four-year-old's memoir of her youth* by Jamie Lee Curtis.
3. Once you finish reading the book, ask the children if the story reminded them of any other memories they have about growing up.

### **Activity 2:**

"My Timeline" (30 minutes)

1. Ask students and parents to find pictures of the students growing up. There should be some variety, starting as a baby and moving toward the student's

- current age. Ask parents to lightly mark the child's approximate age on the back of each picture. Have the students bring these pictures to school. Cut bulletin board paper in half lengthwise. It should be about four feet long.
2. Distribute the bulletin board paper to the students. Have them place their pictures on the bulletin board paper. This may be in chronological order or however they choose. Let the students glue or tape their pictures to the bulletin board paper.
  3. When students have placed the pictures on the bulletin board paper allow them to use markers to decorate and label their timeline.
  4. When students are finished allow them to share their timelines with the rest of the class. This may be done at one time or over several days. You may also want to put them up around the room so the students can look at each timeline in more detail.

### Activity 3:

“Discussion” (20 minutes)

1. Review with students that everybody changes as they get older. Their bodies change on the inside and outside. This change continues all your life.
2. Move on to what happens when you get older than they are now. When they reach about the fourth grade some changes will take place. These changes will be the start of a time called puberty. This begins between the ages of 10 and 14.
3. Some changes that students may notice are getting taller and a little rounder. On the inside of the body boys begin to produce a hormone called testosterone. They also begin to produce sperm. This is needed to make babies. Girls also change on the inside. A hormone called estrogen is produced in the girl's body. This helps prepare the body to create a baby. Explain that the body is preparing to become an adult. These changes help the body get ready.
4. Finally explain that once a person has reached puberty they are able to create babies.

### Review:

Again talk about the fact that everyone changes as they grow up. Puberty is one part of that change where the body becomes able to create babies. It is a time when children are preparing to become adults.

## Teacher Resources

### Websites:

<http://www.puberty101.com/>

<http://www.teenpuberty.com/>

<http://www.aap.org/family/puberty.htm>

[http://kidshealth.org/kid/grow/body\\_stuff/puberty.html](http://kidshealth.org/kid/grow/body_stuff/puberty.html)

### Books:

*Am I Big or Little?* by Margaret Park Bridges

*As big as me* by Elaine Greenstein

*Babies* by Nicola Baxter

*When I was little: A four-year-old's memoir of her youth* by Jamie Lee Curtis

## **Reproduction**

### Objectives:

#### Students will:

1. Understand that a male and female are required to create a baby.
2. Know that all animals reproduce.
3. Understand that men and women have reproductive organs and cells specifically for reproduction (sperm and egg cells).
4. Know that for reproduction to take place a sperm cell and an egg cell must come together.
5. Comprehend that the baby grows inside the woman's uterus.
6. A baby comes out of the woman's body through the vagina or through an operation called a Caesarian Section.

### Materials Needed:

Teacher Resources

Transparency

Overhead Projector

Incubator

Fertilized chicken egg

*Where do babies come from?* By Angela Royston

### Basic Concepts:

Reproduction is the process of an egg becoming fertilized by a sperm and becoming a baby. A woman carries the baby in her uterus for 9 months. When the baby is born it either comes out through the vagina or by a Caesarian Section.

### Introduction (1 minute):

"Reproduction is when a baby is created and born. A male and female are required for a baby to be made."

### Class Activities:

"What do you know?" (25 minutes)

"Eggs" (ongoing)

"Where do babies come from?" (20 minutes)

### Activity 1:

"What do you know?" (25 minutes)

1. Introduce the idea of reproduction. Explain that a male and female are required for reproduction to occur. A baby then grows and is born. Ask the students if anyone they know who has had a baby.
2. Once students have shared their experiences about people they know ask if they have ever seen baby animals. Explain that animals also need a male and female to reproduce, just like people.

3. Use chickens or ducks as an example. Say that the female lays an egg. This egg cannot become a baby without the male sperm fertilizing the egg. This is why a male and female are needed to make a baby.

#### Activity 2:

##### “Eggs” (ongoing)

1. Obtain an incubator and a fertilized egg, more than one if possible.
2. Set the fertilized egg and incubator up in an area where the students will be able to observe.
3. Explain to the students that the egg must stay warm for the baby to grow. Help them remember that the egg came from a female and was fertilized by a male. This makes a baby. An egg you eat is not fertilized, so no baby is created.
4. Tell students that you will observe the egg over time until it hatches. You will then watch the baby chick grow.

#### Activity 3:

##### “Where do babies come from?” (20 minutes)

1. Read the book *Where do babies come from?* by Angela Royston.
2. Ask students what is required for a baby to be created (male and female).
3. Ask the student what the female has that is needed for a baby to be created (eggs). Then ask what a male has that is required to create a baby (sperm).
4. Show the transparency of the sperm fertilizing an egg.
5. Once the egg and sperm combine a baby begins to grow. Show the pictures in the book again of the baby developing inside the mother. Explain that the baby grows in the woman’s uterus for 9 months before it is born.
6. A baby comes out of the woman either through the vagina or an operation called a Caesarian Section. A Caesarian Section is an operation where the doctor cuts open the mother’s uterus and takes the baby out.
7. Remind students that men and women can create babies once they reach puberty.

#### Review:

Tell the students that the sperm from a man and the egg from a woman are required to come together in order to make a baby. The baby then grows in the woman’s uterus for 9 months and then comes out through the vagina or a Caesarian Section.

## Teacher Resources

### Websites:

<http://www.scarleteen.com/> (good for older students)

<http://www.tvdsb.on.ca/saunders/courses/online/SNC1D/McIntosh/biology/human-conception.htm>

<http://www.fertilitytulsa.com/roadmap/conception.php>

### Books:

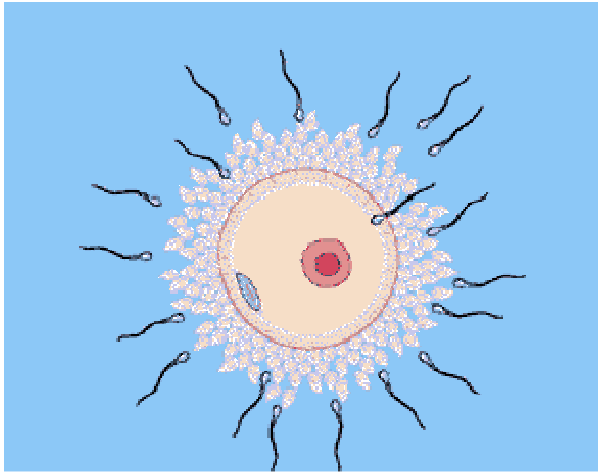
*Beginnings: How families come to be* by Virginia Kroll

*What Comes in Spring?* by Barbara Savadge Horton

*Where do babies come from?* by Angela Royston



## Transparency



### FETAL DEVELOPMENT

*From zygote to full term.*

For McGraw-Hill Publishing

© Cynthia Turner

## **Body Image**

### **Objectives:**

Students will:

1. Be aware that bodies come in different shapes, sizes, and colors.
2. Know that everyone's body is special. This is also true of people who are disabled.
3. Understand that differences in bodies make everyone unique and special.
4. Realize that every person can be proud of their body.
5. Appreciate the differences between all people.

### **Materials Needed:**

Paper

Crayons or markers

*I'm Glad to be Me* by P.K. Hallinan

Teacher Resources

### **Basic Concepts:**

Every person is different and special. Each person should be proud of their bodies whether they are disabled or not. These differences make us all unique.

### **Introduction (2 minutes):**

We talked about how we all change as we grow up and get older. These changes take place at different times and in different ways for everyone. These differences make us unique and special.

### **Class Activities:**

"Picture of me" (20 minutes)

"I'm glad to be me" (20 minutes)

"Everyone is special" (10 minutes)

### **Activity 1:**

"Picture of me" (20 minutes)

1. Give each student a piece of paper and some crayons or markers. Ask them to draw a picture of themselves. Tell them to be sure to include anything special about how they look.
2. When each student has finished their drawing ask them to share their pictures. Have students point out anything they drew that is special about them.
3. Once all students have shared their pictures ask them if every picture was the same. Ask how the pictures were different.
4. Point out that since each person drew something special about themselves that means each person is special.

### **Activity 2:**

"I'm glad to be me" (20 minutes)

1. Read *I'm Glad to be Me* by P.K. Hallinan.

2. Ask the students why the main character was glad to be themselves. Then ask the students why they are glad to be them. Point out that there are some of the same reasons as well as different reasons.
3. Continue with “Everyone is special” discussion.

Activity 3:

“Everyone is special” (10 minutes)

1. Tell students that everyone should be able to find something special about themselves. Ask if they think this is also true of people with disabilities. Point out that people with disabilities are special just like the rest of them.
2. Ask if students can think of anything else that makes people special.

Review:

Say that every person is different. These differences make each person special. Everyone including disabled people is unique. People come in different sizes, shapes, colors, abilities, and change and grow at different times.

## Teacher Resources

### Books

*Alex is my Friend* by Marisabina Russo

*I'm Glad to be Me* by P.K. Hallinan

*Just Beg Enough* by Mercer Mayer

*My Brother, Matthew* by Mary Thompson

*Some Kids use Wheelchairs* by Lola M. Schaefer

## **Sexual Orientation**

### **Objectives:**

Students will:

4. Be made aware that there are different types of love.
5. Know that people can love people of the same or opposite sex.
6. Understand that people who love people of the opposite sex are heterosexual.
7. Know that people who love people of the same sex are homosexual.
8. Recognize that homosexual men may be called gay men and homosexual women are sometimes called lesbians.
9. Understand that all people deserve to be respected no matter who they love.
10. Know that nobody deserves to be called names or made fun of.
11. Recognize that there are many different types of families.

### **Materials Needed:**

Paper

Crayons or pencils

*Heather has two Mommies* by Lesléa Newman

Teacher Resources

### **Basic Concepts:**

People love many people in different ways. Homosexual people love people of the same sex. Everyone deserves to be respected no matter who they love or what type of family they are part of. Since all people are different all families are different.

### **Introduction (3 minutes):**

“We talked about every person being different and special. This is also true when we talk about who you love. There are different ways to love people. You probably love your brother or sister differently than you love your mom or dad. Some people love people of the opposite sex while others love people of the same sex.”

### **Class Activities:**

“My Family” (20 minutes)

“Heather has two mommies” (15 minutes)

“Discussion” (20 minutes)

### **Activity 1:**

“My Family” (20 minutes)

1. Have kindergarten and first grade students draw a picture of their family. Tell them to make it as detailed as they would like. Have second and third graders write about their families. Instruct students to include any step-parents or any other people special to their families.
2. When students have finished their pictures or writing let them share their families and what makes them special. Point out to students that not all families are the same. This is because not all people are the same. Families can have different people in them.

### Activity 2:

“Heather has two mommies” (15 minutes)

1. Read the book *Heather has two Mommies* by Lesléa Newman.
2. Ask the students if they noticed something special about the family in the book.
3. Go on to talk about the fact that the two mommies in the story love each other. Women who love other women are sometimes called lesbians. When two men love each other they can be called gay men. Gay men and lesbians are called homosexuals. People who love others of the opposite sex are called heterosexual.
4. Continue with “Discussion.”

### Activity 3:

“Discussion” (20 minutes)

1. Ask the students if they think it matters if you love a person of the same or opposite sex. Have them explain their reasons.
2. Remind students that they had previously talked about how everyone is different and special. Everyone should be able to be proud of themselves.
3. Since each person is special that means other people should respect their differences. Everyone deserves to be respected no matter who they love.
4. It is never okay to make fun of someone who is different from you or call them names. This can hurt other people’s feelings.

### Review:

Every person is different and special. Since everyone is different every family is different. Families can be made up of a mom and dad, two dads, two moms, and many other combinations. When two women love each other they are called lesbians. When two men love each other they are called gay men. Gay men and lesbians as a group are called homosexuals. When people love a person of the opposite sex they are called heterosexual. Everyone deserves to be respected no matter who they love or how their family is shaped.

## Teacher Resources

### Books

*Beginnings: How families come to be* by Virginia Kroll

*Whoever You Are* by Mem Fox

*Your Family My Family* by Joan Drescher

## **Appendix B**

### **Assessment of Early Childhood Sexuality Curriculum**

Name:

Grade Taught:

Please review the curriculum and answer the following questions in as much detail as possible.

1. Do you currently teach any of the topics presented in the curriculum? Which ones?
2. Are the concepts and activities in the curriculum understandable? If not, how could they be made more so?
3. Based on your review of the curriculum would you teach the concepts? Which ones? Would you use the activities presented? Which ones?
4. What changes would you make to the content?
5. What changes would you make to the activities?
6. Are there any activities you would use in place of or in addition to the ones presented in the curriculum? Be as specific as possible.
7. Can you suggest any resources that other teachers would find helpful?
8. Any other additional comments

Please type your answers and email them to me (either in an email or as an attachment) at [smith.4434@osu.edu](mailto:smith.4434@osu.edu) by Monday, May 15, 2006. Thank you very much for your participation.

Megan Smith